



**Economic and Social
Council**

Distr.
LIMITED

E/CN.4/1998/L.33
3 April 1998

Original: ENGLISH

COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS
Fifty-fourth session
Agenda item 16

RIGHTS OF PERSONS BELONGING TO NATIONAL OR ETHNIC,
RELIGIOUS AND LINGUISTIC MINORITIES

Argentina, Australia*, Austria, Bosnia and Herzegovina*, Chile,
Croatia*, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia*, Ethiopia*, Finland*,
Guatemala, Hungary*, Iceland*, India, Ireland, Italy, Liechtenstein*,
Lithuania*, Norway*, Peru, Poland, Portugal*, Republic of Korea,
Romania*, Russian Federation, Slovakia*, Slovenia*, Switzerland*,
Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and
United States of America: draft resolution

1998/... Rights of persons belonging to national or ethnic,
religious and linguistic minorities

The Commission on Human Rights,

Recalling General Assembly resolution 47/135 of 18 December 1992, as
well as subsequent resolutions on the Declaration on the Rights of Persons
Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities,

Considering that the promotion and protection of the rights of persons
belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities
contribute to political and social stability and peace and enrich the cultural
heritage of society as a whole,

* In accordance with rule 69, paragraph 3, of the rules of procedure of
the functional commissions of the Economic and Social Council.

Concerned by the frequency and severity of disputes and conflicts concerning minorities, and their often tragic consequences, and that persons belonging to minorities are particularly vulnerable to displacement,

Acknowledging that the United Nations has an increasingly important role to play regarding the protection of minorities by, inter alia, taking due account of and giving effect to the Declaration,

Welcoming the inter-agency consultation of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights with United Nations programmes and agencies on minority issues,

Recalling its resolution 1995/24 of 3 March 1995, in which the Commission, inter alia, decided to authorize the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities to establish, initially for a three-year period, an inter-sessional working group consisting of five of its members, to meet each year for five working days in order to promote the rights of persons belonging to minorities,

Taking note of Sub-Commission resolution 1997/23 of 27 August 1997,

1. Takes note of the report of the Secretary-General on the rights of persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities (E/CN.4/1998/90), as well as of the report of the Working Group on Minorities on its third session (E/CN.4/Sub.2/1997/18), and in particular the recommendations contained therein;

2. Reaffirms the obligation of States to ensure that persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities may exercise fully and effectively all human rights and fundamental freedoms without any discrimination and in full equality before the law in accordance with the Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities;

3. Urges States to promote and protect the rights of persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities, as set out in the Declaration, and to take, as appropriate, the necessary legal and practical measures;

4. Calls upon States to continue to include in their reports to human rights treaty bodies, in accordance with relevant conventions, information on measures taken for the promotion and protection of the rights of persons

belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities, and to consider ways to facilitate contributions from national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities in the preparation of national reports;

5. Recommends that the human rights treaty bodies, when considering reports submitted by States parties, give particular attention to the implementation of articles relating to minorities;

6. Calls upon the Secretary-General to make available, at the request of Governments concerned, qualified expertise on minority issues, including the prevention and resolution of disputes, to assist in existing or potential situations involving minorities;

7. Requests the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights to continue her efforts to improve the coordination and cooperation of United Nations programmes and agencies active in the field of the promotion and protection of the rights of persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities;

8. Calls upon the High Commissioner to continue to promote, within her mandate, the implementation of the Declaration and to engage in a dialogue with Governments concerned for that purpose;

9. Calls upon all special representatives, special rapporteurs and working groups of the Commission to continue to give attention, within their respective mandates, to situations involving minorities;

10. Commends the role of the Working Group on Minorities of the Sub-Commission as an important forum for reviewing the promotion and practical realization of the Declaration, for examining possible constructive solutions to problems involving minorities, recommending further measures, as appropriate, for the promotion and protection of the rights of persons belonging to national ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities, as well as for its work achieved so far;

11. Decides to extend the mandate of the Working Group with a view to its holding one session of five working days annually;

12. Requests the Secretary-General to provide the Working Group, from within existing resources, with all the necessary services and facilities to fulfil its mandate;

13. Calls again upon States, intergovernmental organizations, United Nations bodies and non-governmental organizations to participate actively in the work of the Working Group, including through written contributions;

14. Requests the Secretary-General to submit to the Commission at its fifty-fifth session a report on the implementation of the present resolution;

15. Decides to continue consideration of this issue at its fifty-fifth session under the same agenda item.
